



TRANSNATIONAL VISION STATEMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

Saint Martin, the symbol of sharing, is one of the most popular saints in Central Europe (CE) with thousands of monuments dedicated to him, as well as a rich intangible heritage (folk traditions, legends) keeping his memory alive.

In 2005, the Council of Europe named Saint Martin as a European personality and thus also confirmed his importance for the formation of a more solidary, human and reciprocal Europe. His philanthropic gesture of sharing his military coat with a beggar has become the basis on which European nations should build their common future. Saint Martin therefore essentially represents the ethical ideal of human solidarity, which has deeply impacted today's cultural consciousness of the European nations since the beginning of his worship. This is proved by the folk stories about Saint Martin, which are so faithfully shown in all his portrayals: Saint Martin has not become the symbol of a Roman soldier or a Christian bishop, but a symbol of human compassion. The Saint Martin of Tours Route, which is based on his personality, aims to enable a diverse cultural exchange through the common European cultural heritage, which will enrich our mutual life and make a friendlier and more human Europe, but mostly deepen the awareness of our common values and foundations. This is by no means an inversion into the past, but on the contrary. Saint Martin is a symbol of prosperity and hope for the future.

The European Cultural Route of Via Sancti Martini links his birthplace, Savaria (present-day Szombathely, the Hungarian city leading the NewPilgrimAge (NPA) project) with Tours in France where he became a bishop. The partner cities of the NewPilgrimAge project, situated along the road or its branches, are committed to safeguard and reinterpret his legacy, via a 21st century approach/point of view, to revive this cultural heritage (CH) and promote the common European values of solidarity and hospitality linked to Saint Martin.

During the project, cities and cultural organisations from four Central European countries (Hungary, Croatia, Italy and Slovenia) will improve the integrated cultural heritage management and valorisation capacities of municipalities, cultural institutions and creative cluster industry actors in order to safeguard and sustainable use the tangible and intangible heritage linked to Saint Martin's life for the upcoming generations.

Additionally, the project will strive to increase the social and economic cohesion by capitalising on the endogenous cultural and community resources to improve local identity, empower communities and boost local SMEs in cultural sectors, also catalysing the visitor industry to grow.



2. WHAT IS A VISION?

A vision is an idea of what kind of processes, practices or even things should be designed, implemented in the future by the organizations as well as local communities.

A vision statement is an aspirational description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future. It is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current and future courses of action.

Creating and implementing vision statements is a big challenge for all involved actors. They can be challenged, as future's wishes, desires, hopes, forward-looking and current situation should be suitably balanced. The vision, in fact, should not be so idealistic that it becomes unattainable.

Therefore, the transnational vision for the NPA project, includes the proposals, suggestions and opinions of the project partners as well. The vision statement is thus a joint document on the operations of the project partners in the next 10-years-time, and focuses on some ideas on how NewPilgrimAge cities should:

- Develop a community-sourced cultural heritage valorisation framework and
- Establish a collaborative and sustainable network across European countries (in particular those involved in the NewPilgrimAge project).

To set a mid-term or long-term cultural valorisation framework, the 'backcasting methodology' will be applied. The 'backcasting methodology' is a creative approach beginning planning processes with setting a desirable future and step-by-step moving backwards to the present.

3. NPA'S COMMON VISION FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

In 10 years' time from now, NPA cities, based on the existing awareness of Saint Martin's values in the partner organisations, each and every partner will promote and strengthen these values in their local community and the future strategies for local development will be built on to safeguard the tangible and intangible heritage linked to Saint Martin's life for the upcoming generations and also to improve local identity and empower communities.

These values will be incorporated in many social and cultural activities lead by the local communities (e.g. NGOs, local association, heritage communities, individuals, youth initiatives), where citizens will be empowered to use and develop Saint Martin's heritage for different sustainable development purposes, e.g. care for environment and sustainable use of natural resources, development of the green economy and protection of cultural diversity. Strong mutual collaboration and friendship among people from all



generations at local, national and transnational level will also foster a better safeguarding of the cultural heritage by decision makers and entrepreneurs, who, together with the experts and the civil society, will set up and develop strong local and transnational networks essential for strengthening the national and European identity as well as the well-being of citizens.

According to contemporary participatory democracy approaches, which are gaining ground in the field of cultural heritage, the vision puts special focus on involving the civil society in the process of implementing project activities, especially young people who are the future of European communities. At the same time, the older population should not be excluded, as the elderly represents an increasing share of the European population. Moreover, a great attention is to be paid on the connection between heritage, cultural services, marketing and entrepreneurship. Without appropriate entrepreneurship initiatives linked to the heritage, including cultural services, a higher employment rate of the population will not be achieved. Finally, special focus should be put on heritage, natural landscape and environment, which should be maintained in accordance with the policy for sustainable development.

An effort will be put by the NPA project partners to act in their communities in order to:

- Increase and boost the communication and collaboration among the main groups of stakeholders, especially among authorities, experts, local citizens and business.
- Find a common way to connect all actors who work on Saint Martin's heritage in order to improve cooperation.
- Ensure coordination among different local visions.
- Develop new forms of cultural services to improve cultural initiatives and accessibility to historical sites, including eventual fundraising.
- Increase the knowledge of Saint Martin's heritage among residents firstly as some ignore the existing Saint Martin's heritage.
- Increase the level of voluntary/cultural/social work in the local communities.
- Reinforce the capacity of local communities to be empowered and involved in a common vision to link past, present and future.
- Increase the capacity to transmit traditions from past to present.



4. RESOURCES

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